Mr. K. S. Panicker *(Ezhuvas-Trichur)*: The Select Committee may consist of the Advocate-General, the Diwan Peishkar, the Chief Engineer, Messrs. C. N. Ittiravi Nambudiri, T. K. L. Kunjuvareed, V. R. Krishnan Ezhuthassan, Thevanna Gounder and the Mover.

Motion put and carried

NON-OFFICIAL RESOLUTIONS

I. Abrogation of Proclamation II of 1120 *(cont.)*

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Vadakkancheri)*: The resolution that was being discussed by the House when it rose last is that Proclamation II of 1120 which imposes a duty on betel nut be abrogated. The Hon'ble Mover has placed the facts before the House while introducing the resolution. I was on my legs when the House rose last supplementing his remarks. I was then saying Sir, that the only reason given by the Government for imposing this duty, which is indeed a most unjustifiable duty for the reason that there is already a tax on land on which this arecanut is grown and therefore it amounts to a double taxation which, of course, is objectionable under all cannons of taxation, was that the Imperial Government had imposed such a taxation in British India and that unless this Government also impose similar taxation they would be levying an import duty at the same rate when Cochin Commodity is imported thereto. The Government argued that the position would be the same whether we impose duty or not. They made out a case for this levy here by pointing out that if the duty is levied here we get a rebate worked on a formula while we get absolutely nothing is betel nut imported to British India is subjected to an import duty. This British Indian levy which was intended to fall on the consumer of betel nut, it has been tacitly admitted, Sir, by our Government that really the incidence falls on the grower.

It was indeed a very glad piece of information to read from the papers when the Finance Bill was under discussion in the Central Assembly that the duty of two annas has been reduced to one anna. The Hon'ble Secretary to Government was hinting yesterday that he had his own share in the reduction. In that case I may inform the House that myself had also something to do with it. A corresponding reduction has not been made here yet it is not incumbant that it should be done. But let us concede the position that it will be reduced to one anna so as to fall in line with the Imperial Government. Even that one anna, if it is reduced to that, is an iniquitous tax for the simple reason that it is a double taxaiton. If the argument of the Government for imposing this taxation here was that unless the betel nut is taxed here the question of getting a rebate will not come in and therefore we will only be losers to the extent of the rebate. But from the formula given by the Government the way in which the formula is worked, if you have correct statistics you will be pleased to find, Sir, that we stand to get very little indeed. Actual facts and figures I am sure the Government is not in a position to give us because it is a duty which has been imposed recently and what actual rebate we have got for a particular period our Government may not be in a position to give us. I believe I am right. Will the Hon'ble Secretary enlighten me.

Mr. C. J. Mathew *(Secretary to Government)*: Yes, you are right.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Vadakkancheri)*: Therefore I make this assertion before this House that the rebate that we are going to get is mighty li tle and therefore we can easily say yes to the threat of the Imperial Government, which after all is not going to last for long. Even if it is going to continue for sometime, can we very well say, yes to that threat. we may tell them, Sir, by all means impose an import duty when the commodity is taken there, for the simple reason that what you are likely to get is very little indeed indeed very little. One other thing is this. Now that the Imperial Government have reduced the duty to one anna in the pound naturally you will fall in line and even if the duty is collected at one anna you will have to keep the whole establishment with all the vaguaries thereof and spend on them as much as you now spend when you are taxing at the rate of 2 annas. If the collection is reduced to one anna your total collection will be 50 per cent of what you are now collecting and you will be spending cent per cent of what you are now spending what therefore we will be contributing to the Imperial coffers will be only 50 per cent with the result that when worked at the known formula your rebate, imaginary rebate, will also be reduced by 50 per cent. So with all these things we are not going to gain anything, at any rate not much, by having this duty except trouble and annoy the arecanut grower to the extent that he is now being annoyed. So, Sir, for all the reasons stated by the Hon'ble Mover Mr. Ipe I submit, Sir, that this iniquitous piece of tax be done away with by abrogating Proclamation II of 1120 as may be abrogated since it is clear that we are not going to be losers to any great extent. Even if we are going to be losers slightly the benefit to

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the poor arecanut grower is very great. He will also free from the innumerable annoyances actually seen in the process of this collection. The resolution before the House is for the abrogation of this Proclamation and I strongly support the motion.

Mr. C. J. Mathew *(Secretary to Government):* Sir, I am constrained to oppose the motion. I have already pointed out to the House what the Hon'ble Member for Vadakancheri says is true, namely that it will end in resulting in some proportionate benefit to the arecanut grower, the Government will be prepared to consider it, but as a matter of fact they are sure to impose and import duty the moment we stop the tax here. That is certain and when that happens whatever may be the quantity that we are getting I mean the share of the levy, it does not matter whether it is one, two or three rupees, it is not anything going to be of benefit to the producer by our droping out of the agreement, because they will start to the duty at the other end and naturally the levy will fall untimately on the grower whether we levy it here or they levy it in British India. So long as there is no such escape from the duty why not we levy it here and get whatever share we can from the common pool. If the agreement is there we stand to benefit by it and we stand loose by dropping ourselves out of it because I know for certain the moment we stop it they will start the import duty and the the poor grower will be subject to the same hardship as he is subjected to now. The only way to help him is by the Bill which we have brought forward to-day, namely getting better market condition and seeing that he gets his proper return. Towards that end we are prepared to do anything. All the money that we may get from the common pool can be utilised for the purpose regulating the market and doing whatever is necessary for the actual producer to get his real return. Short of that I do not see any point in our alone dropping out of the scheme and taking a different policy altogether. So having agreed to join the common pool system and having agreed to work it up to that limit when the Government of India will drop it themselves, I am afraid, this Government alone cannot accept the present proposal and drop out of the scheme.

Motion put and lost

2. Introduction of Free Compulsory Primary Education

Mr. A. Eachara Menon *(Chittur-Tattamangalam):* Sir, the resolution standing in my name is "This Council recommends to the Government that free compulsory primary education be introduced in the State and that as a first step a few Primary Schools in localities where the schools are not well attended be taken up at once." I can easily omit the first part of the resolution because the Government in passing order on the Education Committee's report have said that they are going to introduce free compulsory primary education. The second part is that as a first step a few Primary Schools in localities where the schools are not well-attended be taken up atonce. There are schools where very few pupils attend the classes. Having those schools there is not just. Either they should be taken away or compulsion must be introduced so that the school-going population may resort to schools. In Chittur there are schools, 4 or 5 schools where the attendance is very low. There are two schools in Nemmara of which one has already been closed down for want of boys. There are boys of school-going age there but they are not attending schools.

Rao Sahib K. Ayyappan *(Ezhuvas-Kanayannur):* Are they aided schools or Government schools ?

Mr. A. Eachara Menon *(Chittur-Tattamangalam):* Some are aided and some are Government schools.

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Ernakulam):* The Government do not propose to take up schools.

Mr. A. Eachara Menon *(Chittur-Tattamangalam):* I have not said that, read the resolution.

Rao Sahib K. Ayyappan *(Ezhuvas-Kanayannur):* The Government schools are already in their hands so why should they take up.

Mr. A. Eachara Menon *(Chittur-Tattamangalam):* You read the resolution. There are schools, there are Government schools where there is no sufficient attendance. In the case of such schools compulsion has to be introduced so that the pupils may go to schools. As an instance I shall quote two or three cases at Pothur where Mr. Thevanna Kounder lives the boys of Kounders do not attend schools. There are very many poor and suppressed classes who do not send their children to schools. When I was a member of that constituency I used to visit

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